PENROD

CHAPTER XXIII.

Over the Fence.

IN no mood to approve of anything introduced by Fanchon she had scornfully refused from the first to dance the new "step" and because of its bonfire popularity found herself neglected in a society where she had reigned as beauty and belle. Faithless Penrod, dazed by the sweeping Fanchon, had utterly forgotten the amber curls. He had not once asked Marjorie to dance. All afternoon the light of indignation had been growing brighter in her eyes, though Maurice Levy's defection to the lady from New York had not fanned this flame. From the moment Fanchon had whispered familiarly in Penrod's ear and Penrod had blushed Marjorie had been occupied exclusively with resentment against that guilty pair. It seemed to her that Penrod had no right to allow a strange girl to whisper in his ear, that his blushing when the strange girl did it was atrocious and that the strange girl herself ought to be arrested.

Forgotten by the merrymakers, Marjorie stood alone upon the lawn, clinching her small fists, watching the new dance at its high tide and hating it with a hatred that made every inch of her tremble. And, perhaps because jealousy is a great awakener of the virtues, she had a perception of something in it worse than lack of dignity—something vaguely but outrageously reprehensible. Finally when Penrod brushed by her, touched her with his elbow and did not even see her, Marjorie's state of mind (not unmingled with emotion) became dangerous. In fact, a trained nurse chancing to observe her at this juncture would probably have advised that she be taken home and put to bed. Marjorie was on the verge of hysterics.

She saw Fanchon and Penrod assume the double embrace required by the dance. The "Slingo Sligo Slide" burst from the orchestra like the lunatic shriek of a gin maddened negro, and all the little couples began to bob and dip and sway.

Marjorie made a scene. She sprang upon the platform and stamped her foot.

"Penrod Schofield!" she shouted. "You BEHAVE yourself!"

The remarkable girl took Penrod by the ear. By his ear she swung him away from Fanchon and faced him toward the lawn.

"You march straight out of here!" she commanded.

Penrod marched.

He was stunned; obeyed automatically without question and had very little realization of what was happening to him. Altogether and without reason he was in precisely the condition of an elderly spouse detected in flagrant misbehavior. Marjorie similarly was in precisely the condition of the party who detects such misbehavior. It may be added that she had acted with a promptness, a decision and a disregard of social consequences all to be commended to the attention of ladies in like predicament.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" she raged when they reached the lawn. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

"What for?" he inquired helplessly.

"You be quiet!"

"But what'd I do, Marjorie? I haven't done anything to you," he pleaded. "I haven't even seen you all aftern"—

"You be quiet!" she cried, tears filling her eyes. "Keep still, you ugly boy! Shut up!"

She slapped him.

He should have understood from this how much she cared for him, but he rubbed his cheek and declared ruefully:

"I'll never speak to you again!"

"You will too!" she sobbed passionately.

"I will not!"

He turned to leave her, but paused.

His mother, his sister Margaret and their grownup friends had finished their tea and were approaching from the house. Other parents and guardians were with them, coming for their children, and there were carriages and automobiles waiting in the street. But the "Slingo Slide" went on regardless.

The group of grown up people hesitated and came to a halt, gazing at the pavilion.

"What are they doing?" gasped Mrs. Williams, blushing deeply. "What is it? What is it?"

"What is it?" Mrs. Gelbraith echoed in a frightened whisper. "What"—

"They're tangoing!" cried Margaret Schofield, "or bunny hugging or grizzly bearing or"—

"They're only turkey trotting," said Robert Williams.

With fearful outcries the mothers, aunts and sisters rushed upon the pavilion.

"Of course it was dreadful," said Mrs. Schofield an hour later, rendering her lord an account of the day, "but it was every bit the fault of that one extraordinary child. And of all the quiet, demure little things—that is, I mean when she first came. We all spoke of how exquisite she seemed—so well trained, so finished! Eleven years old! I never saw anything like her in my life!"

"I suppose it's the New Child," her husband grunted.

"And to think of her saying there ought to have been champagne in the lemonade!"

"Probably she'd forgotten to bring her pocket flask," he suggested musingly.

"But aren't you proud of Penrod?" cried Penrod's mother. "It was just as I told you. He was standing clear outside the pavilion"—

"I never thought to see the day And Penrod was the only boy not doing it, the only one to refuse. All the others were"—

"Every one!" she returned triumphantly. "Even Georgie Bassett!"

"Well," said Mr. Schofield, patting her on the shoulder, "I guess we can hold up our heads at last."

Penrod was out in the yard staring at the empty marquee. The sun was on the horizon line, so far behind the back fence, and a western window of the house blazed in gold unbearable to the eye. His day was nearly over. He sighed and took from the inside pocket of his new jacket the "slingshot" Aunt Sarah Crim had given him that morning.

He snapped the rubbers absently. They held fast, and his next impulse was entirely irresistible. He found a shapely stone, fitted it to the leather and drew back the ancient catapult for a shot. A sparrow hopped upon a branch between him and the house, and he aimed at the sparrow, but the reflection from the dazzling window struck in his eyes as he loosed the leather.

He missed the sparrow, but not the window. There was a loud crash, and to his horror he caught a glimpse of his father, stricken in midshaving, ducking a shower of broken glass, glittering razor flourishing wildly. Words crashed with the glass, stentorian words, fragmentary, but colossal.

Penrod stood petrified, a broken sling in his hand. He could hear his parent's booming descent of the back stairs, instant and furious, and then,

He Missed the Sparrow, but Not the Window.

red hot above white lather, Mr. Schofield burst out of the kitchen door and hurled forth upon his son.

"What do you mean?" he demanded, shaking Penrod by the shoulder. "Ten minutes ago, for the very first time in our lives, your mother and I were saying we were proud of you, and here you go and throw a rock at me through the window when I'm shaving for dinner!"

"I didn't!" Penrod quavered. "I was shooting at a sparrow, and the sun got in my eyes, and the sling broke"—

"What sling?"

"This'n."

"Where'd you get that devilish thing? Don't you know I've forbidden you a thousand times"—

"It ain't mine," said Penrod. "It's yours."

"What?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy meekly. "Aunt Sarah Crim gave it to me this morning and told me to give it back to you. She said she took it away from you thirty-five years ago. You killed her hen, she said. She told me some more to tell you, but I've forgotten."

"Oh!" said Mr. Schofield.

He took the broken sling in his hand, looked at it long and thoughtfully, and he looked longer, and quite as thoughtfully, at Penrod. Then he turned away and walked toward the house.

"I'm sorry, papa," said Penrod.

Mr. Schofield coughed, and as he reached the door called back, but without turning his head.

"Never mind, little boy. A broken window isn't much harm."

When he had gone in Penrod wandered down the yard to the back fence, climbed upon it and sat in reverie there.

A slight figure appeared, likewise upon a fence, beyond two neighboring yards.

"Yay, Penrod!" called comrade Sam Williams.

"Yay!" returned Penrod mechanically.

"I caught Billy Blue Hill!" shouted Sam, describing retribution in a manner perfectly clear to his friend. "You were mighty lucky to get out of it."

"I know that!"

"You wouldn't of, if it hadn't been for Marjorie."

"Well, don't I know that?" Penrod shouted, with heat.

"Well, so long!" called Sam, dropping from his fence, and the friendly voice came then, more faintly, "Many happy returns of the day, Penrod!"

And now a plaintive little whine sounded from below Penrod's feet, and, looking down, he saw that Duke, his wistful, old, scraggly dog, sat in the grass, gazing seekingly up at him.

The last shaft of sunshine of that day fell graciously and like a blessing upon the boy sitting on the fence. Years afterward a quiet sunset would recall to him sometimes the gentle evening of his twelfth birthday and bring him the picture of his boy self sitting in rosy life upon the fence, gazing pensively down upon his wistful, scraggly, little old dog Duke. But something else, surpassing, he would remember of that hour, for in the side street close by a pink skirt flickered from behind a shade tree to the shelter of the fence. There was a gleam of amber curls, and Penrod started as something like a tiny white wing fluttered by his head, and there came to his ears the sound of a light laugh and of light footsteps departing, the laughter tremulous, the footsteps fleet.

In the grass between Duke's forepaws there lay a white note folded in the shape of a cocked hat, and the sun sent forth a final amazing glory as Penrod opened it and read, "Your my bow."

THE END.

The Modest Scot.

Love of country is so fine a virtue that it seems difficult to carry it to excess. A resident of a small village in the north of Scotland paid a business visit to London and called on a merchant who, unknown to him, had once made a stay in his native place. In the course of conversation the visitor made use of an expression that led the other to exclaim, "Surely you come from Glen McLuskie?" The assertion, however, was denied. Presently, to the merchant's surprise, another Glen McLuskie expression was heard. "My dear Mr. MacTavish, I feel convinced that you are a Glen McLuskie man after all," insisted the merchant.

"Weel," returned the other, "I'll no deny it any longer."

"Then why didn't you say so at first?" demanded the Englishman.

"Weel," was the calm response, "I didna like to boast o' it in London."—London Chronicle.

Very Sad to Her.

"I heard something very sad this morning," said a mistress to her servant, in explanation of her not feeling well, as the girl commented upon her mistress's appearance.

"Well," said the girl, "I can feel for you, ma'am. I heard something sad this morning too."

"You did?" said the mistress. "Pray, tell me, what was it?"

"The alarm clock, ma'am."—Ladies' Home Journal.

A Queen Made a Color Famous.

Marie Antoinette early in the summer of 1775 appeared before the king, her husband, in a lustrous dress of chestnut brown, and he remarked, laughing, "That puce color is delightfully becoming to you." Very soon all the court ladies had puce colored gowns, but the color not being universally becoming and less extravagant than light brilliant tints the fashion of puce colored toilets was adopted by the upper middle class more than by the nobility, and dyers could hardly fill their orders. The varying shades were given the most peculiar names, none of them attractive, "flea's back," "Paris mud" and "indiscreet tears" being the most euphonious.

DEFY COLD IN MANY WAYS

Men Compelled to Submit to Exposure Have Devised a Number of Ingenious Methods.

Rural mail carriers need never suffer from winter rigors or cold days generally if they follow the example of Homer Slider of Oldtown, Md. Slider makes his daily trip in a buggy mounted on runners in winter, with a complete little stove inside, a small pipe carrying the smoke and gas out at the rear. A bushel of coal carries him through one rural delivery trip nicely. The stove is kept going away into spring on stormy or chilly days.

But this contrivance has been paralleled in the past. According to a Dakota story a tenderfoot inventor sojourning in that region several years ago had a saddle especially made with an asbestos lining. In the pockets of the saddle he was accustomed to place hot bricks when starting on long horseback journeys. The cowboys laughed a great deal at him, asking what was the benefit of toasting at the calves and freezing at the throat. But there were those who would have tried it had the innovation been easily attached.

There is a story of a Minneapolis policeman who puttered a great deal with electricity in his days off, and who was said to have arranged an electric heater in the shape of a belt or strap along the tail of his coat. Scoffers declared that he had a way of throwing a piece of wire over an electric wire in the street and attaching it for a minute to his patent belt and patent transformers.

This he denied at a police trial, admitting, however, that he had been working on a battery heater that could be carried in the coat and produce a very comfortable amount of warmth. Part of his scheme was to construct a heater coat.

TRYING OUT ELECTRIC WAITER

Invention, It Is Believed, Will Do Away With the Employment of Man and Woman Servitors.

An electrical invention which, it is claimed, will do away with waiters in restaurants and hotels is being experimented with. Each table in the restaurant is to be fitted with a frame bearing the menu and a series of electrical "press buttons" corresponding with each item in the menu. The customer sits down before the already laid table, with a neat pile of glistening silver on one side, chooses the dishes which he prefers, and presses the corresponding buttons in turn.

In the kitchen of the restaurant the number of the table and the number of the course required are signaled on a screen to the chefs and their assistants, and in a few seconds a steaming hot dish appears in a little lift at the side of the diner's table.

The customer helps himself, presses a button, and the dish disappears as silently as it came, leaving at the side of the plate a little aluminum ticket indicating the sum to be paid.

Germs Hide for 50 Years.

A fatality which has strangely repeated itself after the passage of a half century in Raymond Millers' Fawn Grove house was attributed by health authorities and attending physicians to diphtheria germs which had lurked in the walls during the long interval.

Fifty years ago diphtheria broke out in a family which previously owned the property and caused several deaths. Shortly before the present outbreaks Miller decided to have the walls of the house papered, and a heavy coating of whitewash was scraped away and this refuse thrown in a heap outside. Warm, damp weather followed and supposedly revived germs from the previous epidemic, which had been imprisoned under the whitewash.—York (Pa.) Dispatch to the Philadelphia Record.

Five Years of Boy Scouts.

The Boy Scout movement in America is only five years old. Yet so common is the sight of the scout uniform, so far-reaching is the scout service and so deep is its impression on the American imagination that it is hard not to think that Boy Scouts have always been.

There are times when all of us despair of the future of the race, so rampant seems evil, so triumphant and arrogant seem vice and selfishness. We know of nothing that can so swiftly restore faith for humanity as the sight of a half-dozen boys in scout khaki.—Toledo Blade.

Convincing Argument.

Timid Lady (about to buy a ticket for New York)—And is the boat that sails on Thursday perfectly safe?

Agent (gravely)—Madam, I can assure you that in all the time this ship has been in service, and that is now a number of years, not once has she gone to the bottom.

Timid Lady (reassured)—Oh, then, it must be all right. What cabins have you vacant?—London Tit-Bits.

French Wheat Crop Large.

French farmers raise more wheat than the Argentine, British India or Canada, all of them great world granaries. France grows about 315,000,000 bushels a year; enough with strict economy to supply herself without help from outside.

Queer.

"Queer, isn't it?"

"What is?"

"You never hear a man admit that he's a self-made failure."

GATHER AND STORE SEED CORN THIS FALL BEFORE IT FREEZES

Go Into Your Best and Earliest Planted Fields During the Last Week in September or Early in October

Quit Guessing—We Cannot Tell When We Select an Ear From the Wagon Box as We Unload or From the Crib What Sort of a Stalk it Came From—We Do Not Know Whether the Stalk Was Weak or Strong, Early or Late, tn Maturity—The Best Way to Improve the Quality, Maturity and Yield of Our Corn is to Select Ears In the Field—It Will Pay You.

By P. G. HOLDEN, Agricultural Extension Department International Harvester Company of New Jersey.

If every ear of corn intended for planting was harvested at the proper time and properly stored, millions of dollars would be added to the value of the corn crop.

Fig. 1. Harvesting the Seed Corn for Next Year's Planting.—Every ear of corn intended for planting should be harvested before the severe fall freezes, and stored where it will dry out and keep dry. In Iowa and the northern half of Illinois this work should be done the last ten days of September and the first four or five days of October. Frozen seed corn costs the country millions of dollars every year.

A Convenient Method of Gathering the Seed as One Passes Between the Rows.—Use an ordinary two-bushel grain sack; a wooden hoop from a nail keg is put in the top of the sack. Some heavy cord, 14 inches long (binding twine doubled several times) is tied to one of the bottom corners of the sack; the other end of the cord is then brought over the shoulder and tied to the hoop in the top of the sack. The cord is wrapped with an old sack to prevent the string cutting the shoulder.

Fig. 2. Tying up the Seed Corn. Putting in the First Ear.—A piece of binding twine is doubled and the ends tied together. Note how the string is held in the hands.

Fig. 3.—Showing the String of Corn Completed Ready to Be Hung

Fig. 1.

Up Where It Will Dry Out and Keep Dry.—When the Last Ear is laid in, one end of the string is slipped under the string in the other hand, and fastened.

Tie and hang up the seed the same day or evening that it is brought in. This method of tying up allows a free circulation of air. It is circulation of air, not heat, that is needed to dry out the seed. Corn commonly contains at this time from 30 to 45 per cent of water. It requires but a few minutes to tie up 300 or 400 ears.

Fig. 4.—Experiments show that the attic or some upstairs room where the windows can be opened to give circulation of air during October and November, is the best place to hang seed corn. A space three by eight feet will hold 200 strings of seed corn like

Fig. 2.

the above or enough to plant 200 acres. Discard three-fourths of it in the spring and there is left sufficient to plant 50 acres, or more than the average acreage on each farm. Hang the string in rows four inches apart each day.

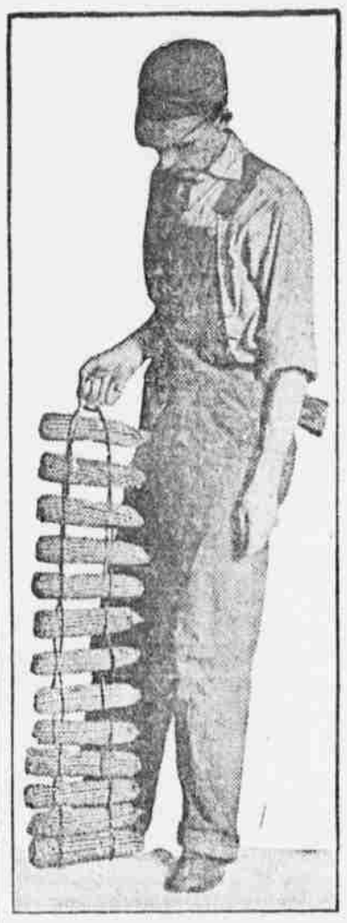

Fig. 3.

One of the very best methods for gathering the seed is to go into the best and earliest planted fields with bags and select well matured ears from the most vigorous stalks. The cut shows a convenient way to arrange a sack so that you may have both hands free for picking.

You must not fail to consider the stalk in selecting your seed, for it takes large, thrifty stalks to produce good big ears. It is not a good plan to take the ear from a stalk that grew in a hill by itself, or from one in the hill with a barren or weal stalk. Many of the kernels on such an ear are likely to be pollenized by the barren or weak stalk.

Choose Ears of a Medium Height.—If you select the highest ears your corn will gradually become late, and if you select the lowest ears you will soon have an early corn with shallow

Fig. 4.

kernels and wide furrows between the rows.

Pick ears that droop over so that their tips are turned downward. Such ears shed water better when it rains and are usually drier than ears standing upright. The shank should be short, as ears with long shanks are harder to husk, and are more often damaged. See that the husks are long enough to cover the tip of the ear, but do not extend far beyond. If the tip is left bare, it is likely to be damaged by insects or disease, and if the husks extend far beyond the point of the ear they are usually tightly closed, so that it cannot dry out well and is difficult to husk.

There should be a medium growth of broad, thrifty leaves distributed evenly over the stalk, and the plant should be free from all form of disease, such as smut, rust, etc., and should be free from suckers.

The advantages of this method of storing are first, that it gives better protection from mice than when it is spread on the floor, or corded in piles or put in racks. Second, it gives better circulation of air, which allows the corn to dry out quickly and thoroughly, thus protecting it from molding or sprouting and from being frozen while it is sappy. The greatest enemy to good seed corn is freezing while it still contains moisture, consequently there is more danger from late harvesting than from too early harvesting. However, it is not a good plan to harvest seed while the corn is immature, as it is more difficult to preserve, will be chaffy and give weaker plants than corn which has been allowed to fully mature on the stalk.